



Long time friends Ed Muller and John – Gayle Pettus find Aruba the perfect place to celebrate life and friends

Matthew's restaurant was the scene for a special birthday celebration, where friends and family toasted not only one, but TWO birthday boys on Wednesday evening. Ed Muller of Westbury, New York and John-Gayle Pettus, originally from Arkansas, but who has lived most of his life in Venezuela, both reached the landmark age of eighty this year, and their families decided that Aruba was the place for everyone to celebrate together.

The party was one year in the planning, and the typically island surroundings of Matthew's in the Casa Del Mar Resort, adjacent to the Aruba Beach Club where they both own timesharing and met so many years ago, was deemed the perfect venue. John and his wife Maria began coming to Aruba for vacations thirty-nine years ago, buying his Beach Club unit when they first broke ground. Ed and his wife Madeleine purchased their vacation apartment at the Beach Club twenty-two years ago, and the two couples become fast friends. John is widowed now, but his children, John Jr. and his daughters Julie and Andrina were there to make it special celebration, along with Ed and John's extended Aruba "family," the good friends they have made over their years vacationing on the island.

John originally passed through Aruba over sixty years ago while working as a merchant marine on a Standard Oil tanker that stopped at the refinery. He was only seventeen at the time; the island made a big impression on him. All the other ports he visited in South America, where he settled there sixty years ago, also impressed him, and finally he married the lovely Maria from Venezuela. The group of celebrants at Matthew's had a truly international flavor, coming from the U.S., Latin America, Trinidad, and both Spanish and English were spoken, often with a lilting Caribbean accent. It was "Happy Birthday, Masha Pabien and Cumpleano Felice" to John and Ed for not only eighty years of life, but also over twenty years of a wonderful friendship!